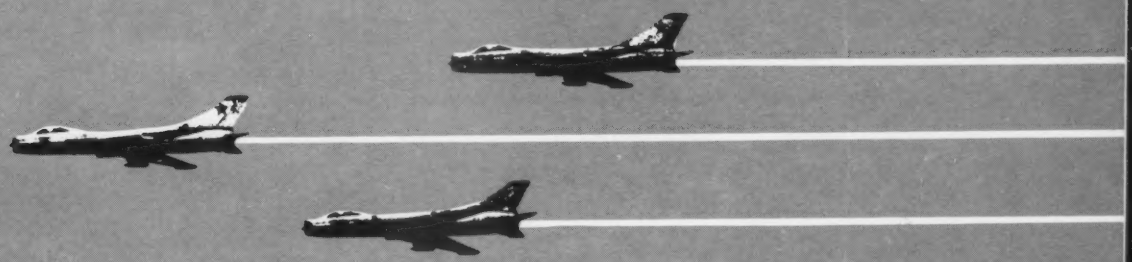
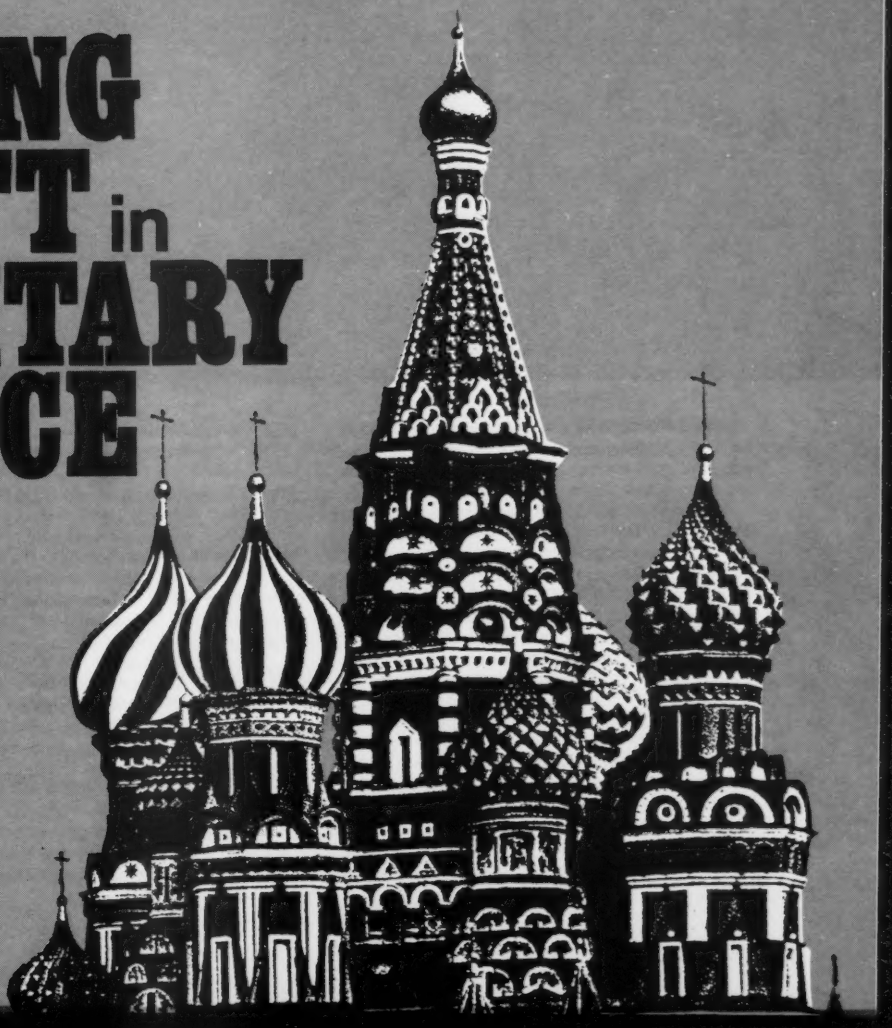
COMMANDERS DIGEST
VOL. 19, NO. 6/MARCH 11, 1976



The MEANING of a SHIFT in the MILITARY BALANCE



THE Military

Soviet long-range reconnaissance aircraft.

Donald H. Rumsfeld was nominated by President Ford as 13th Secretary of Defense Nov. 4, 1975; he was confirmed by the U.S. Senate Nov. 18, 1975; and he was sworn into office Nov. 20, 1975.

Rumsfeld was serving as Assistant to the President when he was nominated to be Secretary of Defense. He was named to the White House position Sept. 27, 1974. As Assistant to the President, he served as a member of the Cabinet, Director of the White House Office of Operations, and as Coordinator of the White House Staff. Previously, he headed President Ford's transition team in August 1974.

Born July 9, 1932 in Chicago, Illinois, Mr. Rumsfeld received a B.A. degree in Politics from Princeton University in 1954, and served in the U.S. Navy as an aviator from 1954 until 1957.

Rumsfeld became active in government in 1958 when he worked as Administrative Assistant to U.S. Representative Dave Dennison of Ohio. In 1959, he became a staff assistant to then U.S. Representative Robert Griffin of Michigan. From 1960 to 1962, he was with the Chicago investment banking firm of A.G. Becker and Company.

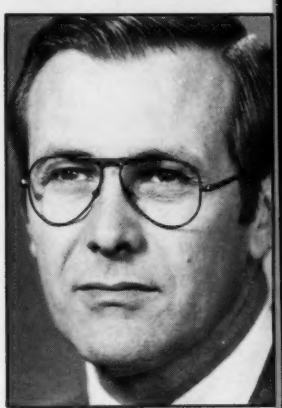
In 1962, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Thirteenth District of Illinois to serve in the Eighty-Eighth Congress. He was reelected in 1964, 1966, and 1968.

In 1969, he resigned his seat in the House to join the Cabinet as an Assistant to the President and the Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity. In December 1970, he was named Counselor to the President, and in October 1971, he was appointed Director of the Cost of Living Council.

Rumsfeld was named U.S. Ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in February 1973.

Rumsfeld has received honorary degrees in law from Park College, Missouri, Lake Forest College, Illinois, and Illinois College, Illinois. Additional awards include the Opportunities Industrial Center's Executive Government Award and the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award.

He married the former Joyce Pierson of Wilmette, Illinois in 1954. They have two daughters, Valerie, 19 and Marcy, 15, and a son, Nicholas, 8.



Secretary Rumsfeld

Balance TODAY

By
DONALD H. RUMSFELD
Secretary of Defense

In the next three months, the Congress will make some of the most important decisions it will make all year . . . the level of total Federal spending, and the amount of that total which will go to the Department of Defense.

At least, national security is one function of government over which the debate does not center on the rightness of Federal involvement. A fundamental responsibility of the U.S. Government is to protect the Nation from external danger and contribute to world peace and stability . . . to provide for the common defense.

Let me begin by asserting that U.S. military capability and strength can today be described as sufficient . . . that is, we have "rough equivalence" to the Soviet Union, which is this Nation's policy.

- U.S. strategic forces retain a substantial, credible, capability to deter all-out nuclear attack.
- The U.S. Navy is capable of carrying out its missions today. However, where we enjoyed virtual seapower monopoly for 30 years, we face different situations in the world in view of the expanding Soviet navy.
- In the Central European Region, we and our allies have what we describe as the basic capabilities necessary to respond to a Warsaw Pact attack.

Of course, with lead times as long as they are in building military capability, the sufficiency we have today results from decisions reached a decade ago. The Secretary of Defense and the President in the mid-1980's will have little basis for confidence in the adequacy of U.S. military capabilities if the adverse trends we have observed in the past 5 to 10 years are allowed to continue.

U.S. DEFENSE TRENDS

The U.S. defense budget has decreased in real terms by more than one-third from the 1968 wartime peak. Today it is 14 per cent below the levels of the prewar, early 1960's.

- Defense spending today is 24.8 per cent of the Federal total in Fiscal Year 1976 — the lowest share since FY 1940, shortly before Pearl Harbor.
- U.S. uniformed military strength has dropped from 3.5 million at the 1968 wartime peak to 2.1 million. There are fewer people in uniform now than at any time since fall of 1950. In prewar 1964, for example, there were 2.7 million personnel in the Armed Forces.
- The active fleet of Navy ships has dropped from 947 fewer than 480 over the past 10 years.

SOVIET DEFENSE TRENDS

While these reductions have been going on in the United States, the Soviet Union has been moving steadily in the other direction.

The constant 1977 dollar value of the resources allocated to Soviet national defense has grown from 107 billion in 1965 to 144 billion in 1975— an average annual increase of more than 3 per cent.

The Soviets have developed an industrial base which has outproduced the United States in most categories of military hardware. The weight of Soviet effort and the momentum they have built up are of serious concern.

Since 1962, when they began expanding maritime in earnest, the Soviets have built more than 1,300 ships for their Navy; the United States constructed about 300 during the same period.

Steady-state Soviet production exceeds ours in tanks, artillery, and tactical aircraft.

The Soviets have increased from 3.4 to 4.4 million men under arms since 1964.

In short, the expansion of Soviet military effort continues steadily — as measured by technological progress, investment capacity, output, and finally, military capabilities. Following are some of the changes we have measured over the past 10 years:

- Strategic Nuclear Forces
  - —Soviets have come from about 225 intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) to some 1,600 today, having overtaken the United States in the late 1960's.
  - —The Soviet submarine-launched ballistic missile system has grown from 29 to more than 700.
  - —Only in the bomber forces does the United States maintain a lead.
- Naval Forces
  - —The Soviets have a 2.5-to-1 advantage in attack submarines.
  - —They have 20 per cent greater numbers of cruisers, destroyers, and frigates (although the major surface combatant numbers include aircraft

carriers, in which the United States has an unquestioned lead).

—There is a marked asymmetry in the way the two Navies have dispersed offensive, standoff weapons capability . . . the U.S. standoff, offensive strength lies almost entirely in 14 aircraft carriers, where the Soviets have 240-odd ships with standoff weapon capability.

—The Soviets have built a force of amphibious lift ships which outnumbers ours, although our **assault** capability and flexibility vastly exceeds theirs.

—Perhaps more important, the Soviets have **deployed** their naval forces on a routine basis worldwide, although not in the same geographical pattern we follow.

• Ground Force Weapons

—Soviet tank inventories exceed ours by nearly 4-to-1.

—They have 2.5 times as much artillery.

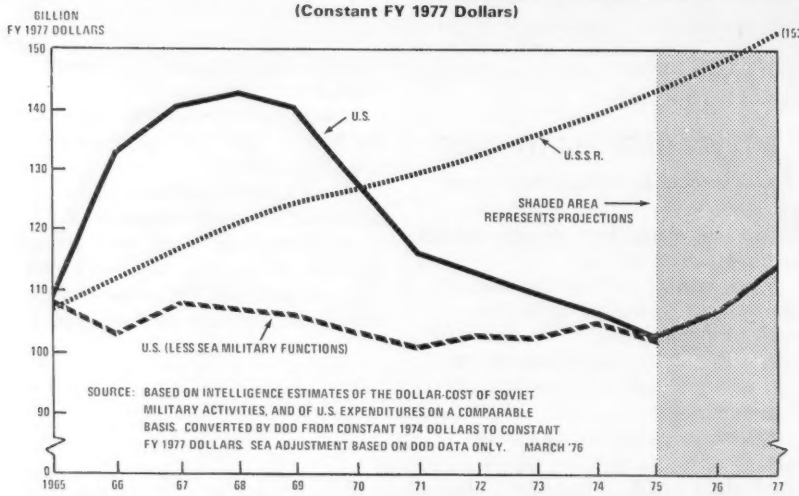
—They have built a modern, capable tactical aircraft force which now exceeds ours numerically.

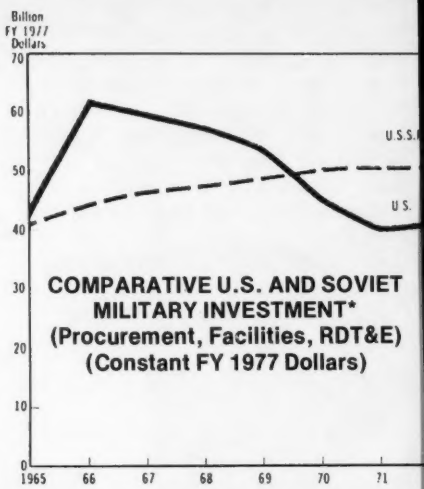
—Only in helicopters do we maintain clear superiority.

This Soviet "Ganef" ram-jet powered surface-to-air missile is known in the U.S. alphanumerical code as the SA-4 missile.

U.S. AND SOVIET DEFENSE PROGRAM TRENDS

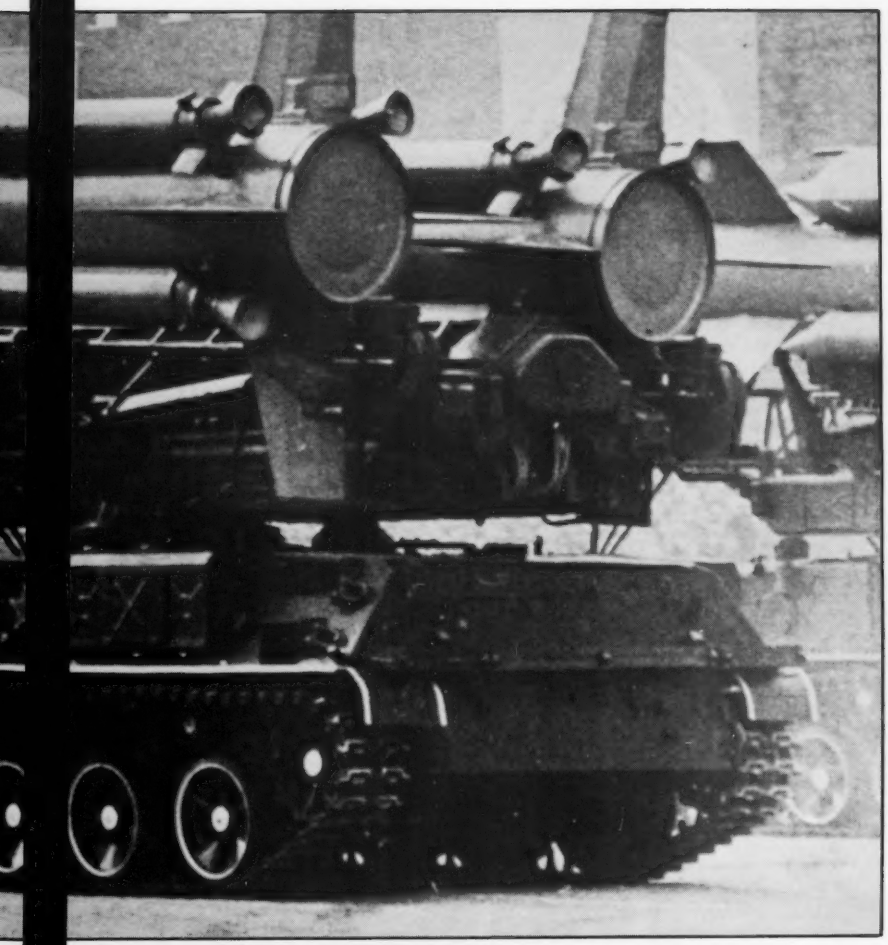
(U.S. Expenditures and Estimated Dollar Costs of Soviet Programs)


(Constant FY 1977 Dollars)
BILLION FY 1977 DOLLARS
150
140
130
120
110
100
90
0
U.S.
U.S.S.R.
(153
SHADED AREA REPRESENTS PROJECTIONS
U.S. (LESS SEA MILITARY FUNCTIONS)
SOURCE: BASED ON INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES OF THE DOLLAR-COST OF SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES, AND OF U.S. EXPENDITURES ON A COMPARABLE BASIS. CONVERTED BY DOD FROM CONSTANT 1974 DOLLARS TO CONSTANT FY 1977 DOLLARS. SEA ADJUSTMENT BASED ON DOD DATA ONLY. MARCH '76
1965 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77



COMPARATIVE U.S. AND SOVIET MILITARY INVESTMENT* (Procurement, Facilities, RDT&E) (Constant FY 1977 Dollars)

*BASED ON INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES IN CONSTANT 1973



The trends summarized — and the momentum behind those trends on both sides — dominate any appraisal of the military balance.

THE KEY MILITARY BALANCES

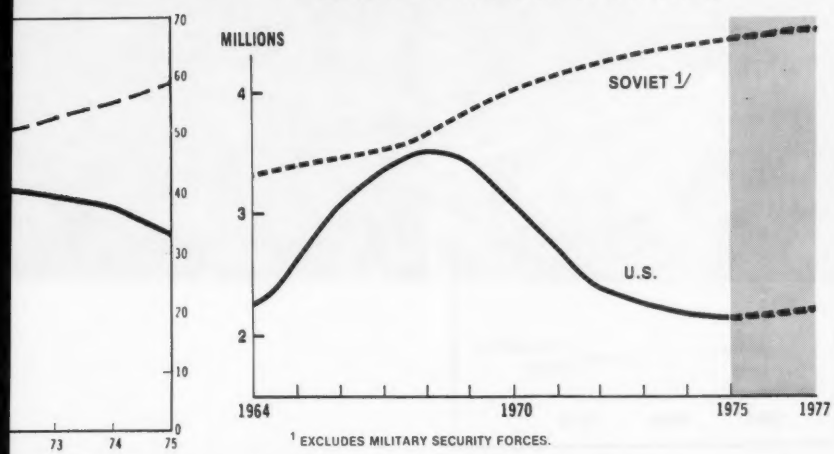
Simple comparisons of numbers of things indicate trends in the weight of effort on each side . . . and they give a feel for military capabilities, especially when one explores qualitative differences in hardware. We do this continuously in net assessments of the military power balance.

There are three principal areas in which we assess the military balance between the United States and the Soviet Union: strategic nuclear forces, naval forces, and Central European forces. We look at the balance from a different point of view in each case . . . depending on our objectives and strategy and, in some cases, the role of allied forces on both sides.

Today, U.S. strategic nuclear forces retain a substantial and credible capability to deter all-out nuclear attack and their ability to execute controlled and limited responses is being enhanced. There is, nevertheless, reason for concern:

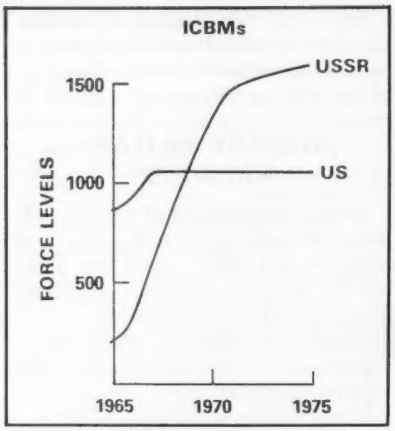
- The Soviets have developed four new ICBMs, two of which are currently being deployed with multiple independently targetable reentry vehicles (MIRVs). Follow-on missiles are already in Research and Development (R&D).
- They have produced a new generation of ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs), one version of which has deployed with a new 4,200-mile-range submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM). A successor is already in R&D.

U.S./U.S.S.R. MILITARY MANPOWER



[1] EXCLUDES MILITARY SECURITY FORCES.

DOLLARS; CONVERTED TO CONSTANT FY 1977 DOLLARS BY DOD.



Changes in Strategic Force Levels

• The Soviets are developing a mobile intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) (in the form of the SS-X-20).

The strategic balance is obviously a critical one and the future U.S. position relative to the Soviet Union in this area is of the utmost importance. Taking Soviet improvements and U.S. developments into consideration, we can expect a continued Soviet advantage in throwweight and megatons, although we should retain the lead in numbers of warheads. These trends mean that in most of the standard indices the Soviet advantage will increase over the next decade, even assuming Congressional support for the proposed program.

There are two qualitative trends which may further shift the balance, if not corrected:

—U.S. submarine and bomber forces are aging, and the Soviets are improving their anti-submarine warfare (ASW) capabilities and their bomber defenses.

—Continuation of current Soviet strategic programs — even within the constraints of Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) — could threaten the survivability of the U.S. Minuteman force within a decade.

The key asymmetries in the strategic balance, then, are these:

• The United States leads in:

—Accuracy of missiles, especially in the potential for a major quantum improvement.

—Combined high accuracy, low yield weapons for discriminating use if we develop them.

—Bomber force capabilities and operational experience.

—Current, but perhaps eroding, base system near Soviets that allows efficient use of aircraft.

• The Soviets lead in:

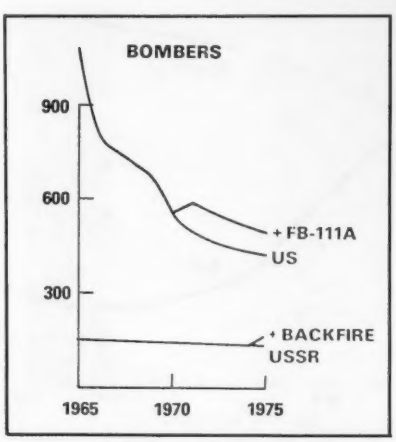
—Air defense against bombers.

—Civil defense preparations to protect population and industry.

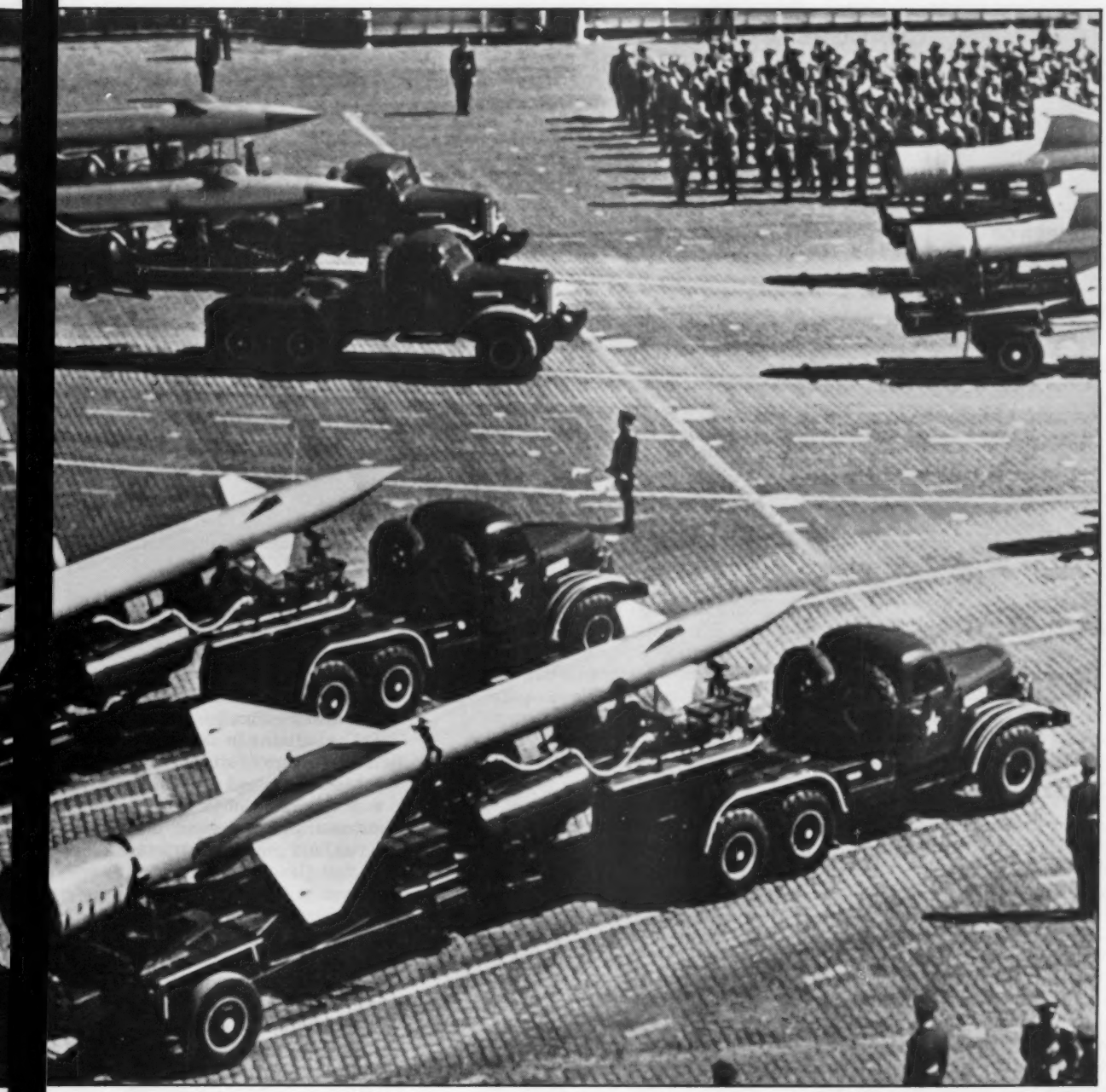
—Development of land-mobile missile systems, and the methods of operating such systems effectively, e.g., camouflage, deception.

—The momentum of current programs.

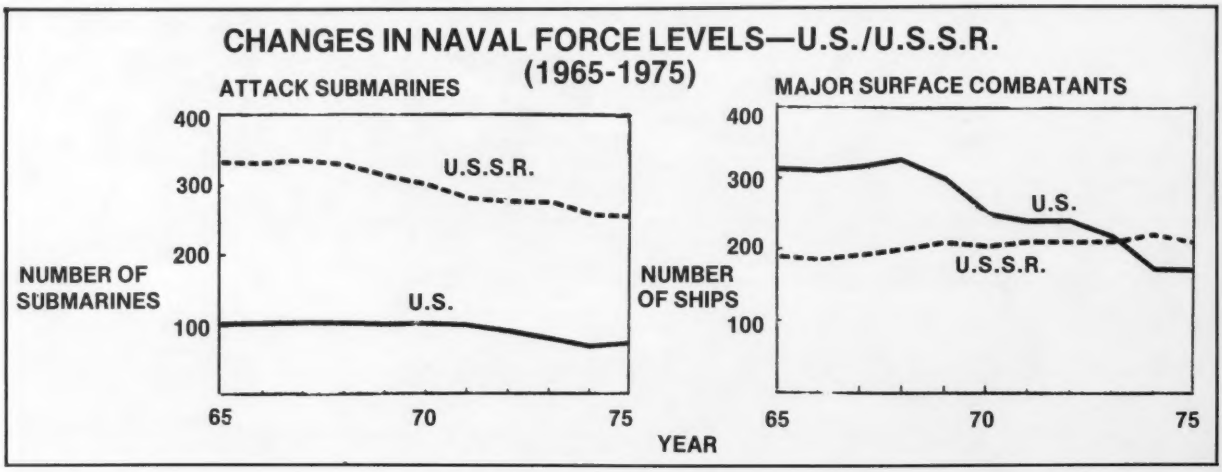
The balance we seek to maintain in the strategic forces area is essential equivalence. The programs which must be undertaken to maintain equivalence are dictated by the trends discussed, and by the potential impact of improving technology, especially that affecting missile accuracy.



Changes in Strategic Force Levels



The Soviets have developed several new missile systems and follow-on missiles are already in research and development.



With respect to naval forces, geographic, political and economic factors have dictated different missions for the U.S. and Soviet navies, Since U.S. interests and allies extend across the seas, U.S. naval forces must be able to exercise sea control and be able to project power ashore. The Soviet Union has been basically a land power, and Soviet naval forces therefore have had as a first priority sea denial. However, the continuing expansion of the Soviet Navy gives clear indication that the Soviets intend to assign worldwide missions to their Navy similar to those we assign to our Navy.

A 1975 comparison of the numbers of ships and total tonnage of the two navies shows two asymmetries. First, the Soviets have more ships (many of which are smaller than 1,000 tons), consistent with the traditional view that their Navy is the seaward extension of the Red Army, largely coastal in orientation. Second, the United States leads in displacement because we have built ships for routine operation on distant deployment. (It is noteworthy that about 60 per cent of the difference in tonnage relates to our 14 aircraft carriers). In fact, the mix of ships in the Soviet Navy is changing steadily as they build bigger, more capable ships and add helicopter and vertical and/or short take off and landing (VSTOL) aircraft carriers.

As already mentioned, each military balance should be thought of differently. In the case of the strategic balance, rough parity is our goal. In the case of the naval balance, because of our dependence on the seas and our alliances, it is essential that the United States be able to control the intervening sea spaces between ourselves and our allies and other interests and that we have the ability to project power where we must. For some contingencies, the naval forces of our allies, which are more substantial than those of the Soviet allies, must be added to our own forces in assessing the balance.

Considering the Central European balance, I believe we and our allies presently have the capability to respond adequately to a Warsaw Pact attack. However, the balance over the long run is less secure than it has appeared to be in the past. We are increasingly concerned that, unless we counterbalance them, increasing Soviet firepower and mobility will begin to give the Warsaw Pact forces an unacceptable advantage.

There are a number of important asymmetries that influence the assessment.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has several advantages:

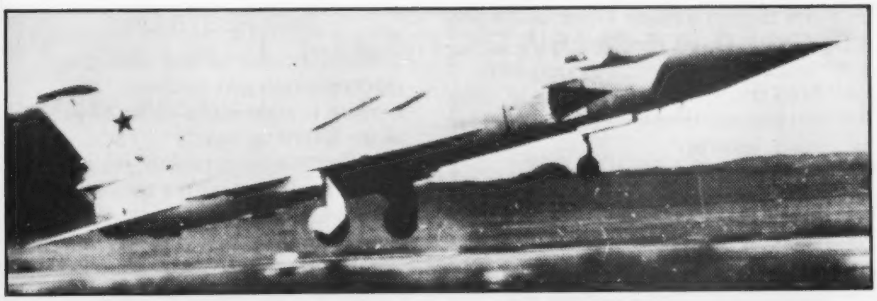
- It has a defensive mission with advantages of interior lines and familiar terrain.
- Its tactical airpower is superior.
- It has more anti-tank weapons, helicopters, and armored personnel carriers.
- It leads in nuclear weapons.

The Warsaw Pact has:

- The initiative in choosing the time and nature of attack.
- More tanks and artillery pieces.
- A multinational force with greater commonality of equipment, doctrine, practice, and command structure.

At first glance these considerations may seem to favor NATO. Comparisons of total military manpower and numbers of weapons across a large number of categories show a rough balance between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, but this does not tell the whole story. Tactical air and ground combat are extremely complex; history contains many examples of numerically superior forces being defeated by opponents who used more effective tactics, had a better plan, or above all were able to achieve surprise.

The Soviets for a long time have



The Flagon short take off and landing aircraft (top), "Kanin" class guided missile destroyer (center), and Russian Moss aircraft (bottom), are part of the Soviet military resources.

stressed an offensive doctrine for a Blitzkrieg-type war. In the past decade they have made significant progress toward building a force which could implement that doctrine. Since the mid-1960's, they have added 140,000 men to their forces facing NATO, introduced five new types of aircraft, and provided their ground forces with a new generation of weapons in virtually every major category.

In the past, new Soviet weapons were product improvements over their predecessors. For example, their T-62 tank was a modified T-55 with a new gun and a few other changes. Their newer weapons, however, have been in most cases totally new designs—and very sophisticated ones. For example, Soviet divisions have been equipped with as many as four different surface-to-air gun and missile systems, each with overlapping air defense capabilities and using different methods to acquire, track and engage

aircraft. Their armored personnel carrier not only carries troops but enables them to fight from within the vehicle. It also mounts anti-tank weapons.

This new generation of weapons has enabled the Soviets to alter the missions of their forces, obtain greater self-confidence that they could implement their offensive doctrine, and force NATO to change its mission priorities. For example:

- For the first time they have acquired a real capability to provide close air support and to conduct interdiction attacks. Their tactical air force is shifting from a largely air defense force to one which can also provide close support to the ground elements.

Their air capabilities still significantly lag NATO, but they have made a large step toward closing that gap.

- Major improvement in ground-based air defense has freed the Soviet Air Force for this air support role, and it has also caused NATO air forces to alter their mission emphasis somewhat to focus more on defense suppression.

Such sharp departures from the past indicate that the Soviets are entering into an era of modern ground and tactical air power roughly equal to our own forces using weapons of roughly comparable technical sophistication.

In looking at the balance in NATO therefore, we must not consider just the static numerical indicators, although these are important. In this case we are in much more of an alliance situation than in the other key balances, and one in which the size of the forces we contribute is in the minority. We must also consider the qualitative changes, especially those which impact directly on the Soviets' ability to implement their offensive doctrine. We hope that NATO could contain a Soviet attack conventionally, but tactical nuclear forces would play a role if Soviet conventional capabilities significantly outpaced NATO's. It is in our interest to raise the nuclear threshold rather than to see it lowered.

In summary, when one considers the strategic nuclear, naval, and central front balances, it is apparent that major changes in Soviet capabilities have occurred. The Soviets have come a long way from the unsophisticated, continentally confined, armed forces of World War II days to superpower status in the 1970's. There is a strong momentum in the Soviet military programs and in the emerging pattern of external projection of Soviet power. There is momentum on our side too . . . a long period of downward trends in force levels, military manpower, and budgets.

THE PROBLEM OF SUFFICIENCY

It is clear to those who look at the military balance which results from these trends that, if we are to maintain sufficiency and, therefore, world stability, these trends must be checked.

Just as you don't start slowing a car when you are halfway through the intersection, you cannot arrest the momentum the world has been experiencing the past 10 years unless action is taken early enough — well before we reach insufficiency and thereby surrender the stability we have and enjoy today.

The world situation can be described in many ways. At best, it is untidy . . . it is not static, nor is it particularly friendly. U.S. military strength — and the world's appreciation of that strength — is fundamental to stability, to maintaining the confidence of our allies, to deterring potential adversaries, and to lending weight to our views and values.

Hopes to achieve arms reduction and limitation agreements are dependent upon an appreciation of U.S. strength.

DoD RESTRAINT

While we seek to improve force modernization and readiness, we propose to tighten the defense budget in the following ways:

- Restraining personnel costs while working to maintain the quality and professional standards of the All Volunteer Force.
- Instituting further efficiencies including base realignments, headquarters reductions, reduced training costs, and civilian manpower reductions.

Should Congress not approve the recommended belt-tightening measures, additional appropriations will be required to avoid unacceptable force level reductions. Moreover, if we fail in the efforts to achieve verifiable agreements which equitably limit strategic arms on both sides, additional appropriations will be required.

DEFENSE BUDGET FLEXIBILITY MYTH

For years there has been a conviction that the Department of Defense was a near-inexhaustible mother lode from which we could draw, without damage or adverse notice, the resources needed for our other national desires.

The cry to "Be more efficient" has been heard. DoD is more efficient. And this year, it will become more so — as it should be.

The cry to "Cut the frills" has also been heard. Some cutting has been done. More will be done this year — as it should be.

The demand to "Improve the combat-to-support ratio" has been heard. Much has been done to support costs to offset increases in combat forces. More is being done this year — as it should be.

But there is a point where there are no longer billions to be saved by such actions. At some point you will have cut the "tail" to the extent that you are up through the hindquarters to

CENTRAL EUROPEAN BALANCE (Non-Mobilized 1975)

NATO LEADS		PACT LEADS
	MANPOWER	—TROOPS
—ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS —ANTI-TANK GUIDED MISSILES —MORTARS	GROUND WEAPONS	—ARTILLERY —TANKS —MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHERS
—GROUND ATTACK —RECONNAISSANCE —HELICOPTERS	AIRCRAFT	—AIR DEFENSE

the shoulders — and what is left is a set of "teeth" . . . with no jaws to move them.

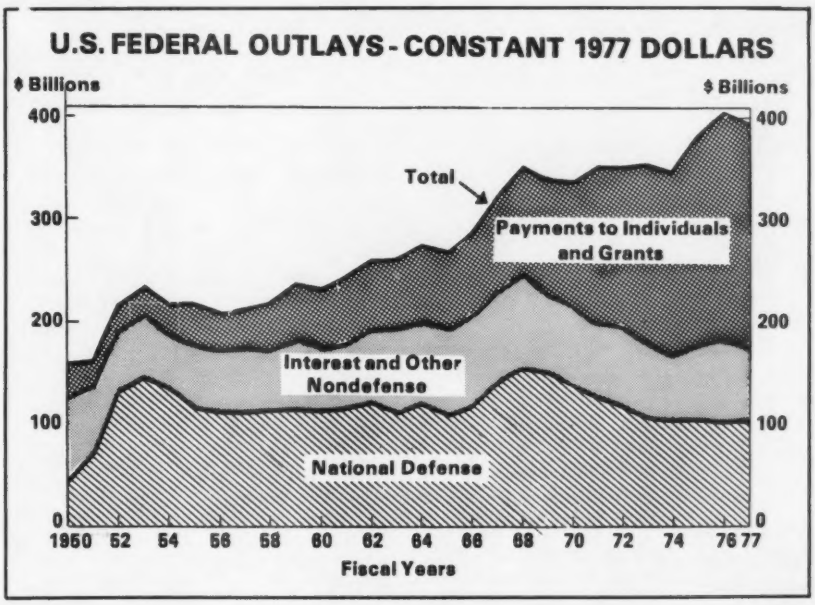
It is out of the question to think that the Nation's non-defense spending can be further funded out of the defense budget. In the extreme:

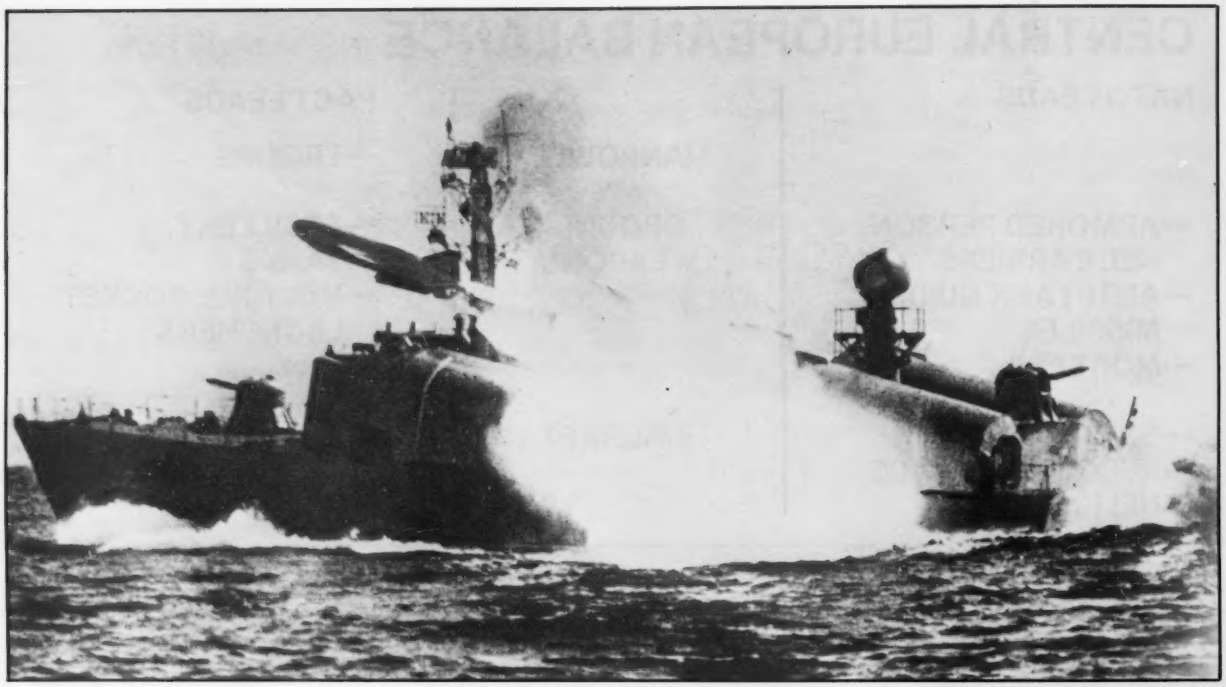
- A 10 per cent increase in non-defense spending would mean a crippling 30 per cent cut in defense.
- A 33 per cent increase in non-defense spending would wipe out the defense establishment altogether.

The FY 77 defense budget has been through one of the toughest Federal budget scrubs ever. Further cuts would require unacceptable reductions in our national security. Meanwhile, the Soviet expansion proceeds.

Thus, it is clear that the days of finding billions of dollars with the "cut it out of Defense because they'll never miss it" method, are over. Additional savings, YES, some . . . but billions, NO. Not without cutting forces. Congressional cuts of the magnitude of recent years, ranging from $4 billion to $7 billion, will:

- Cut into U.S. military capabilities.
- Continue trends which would move the United States to a point of insufficiency.





There are major asymmetries between the navies of the US and the USSR. The standoff offensive capability of the US Navy resides, today, almost entirely in 14 aircraft carriers. The Soviets have spread offensive missile systems over more than 200 large and small combatants.

• Risk U.S. security by unnecessarily injecting a fundamental instability into a world situation that is already less than tidy.

HOW MUCH CAN WE AFFORD?

It is, perhaps, useful to recall the situation which existed just before the Korean War. In a well-publicized appearance before the House Appropriations Committee, General Omar Bradley, Army Chief of Staff, testified in support of the $13 billion FY 1951 defense budget approved by the President, acknowledging that the larger amount urged by the JCS" . . . would be out of all proportion to that which we believe this country could afford at this time." Yet when the Korean War broke out, the Congress quickly increased FY 1951 defense spending to $48 billion and $60 billion in FY 1952. As history shows, the country can "afford" what is needed for National security. Indeed, we cannot afford not to have what is needed.

As I said at the outset, the Congress will soon decide the overall level of defense spending—and, thus, whether or not we as a nation intend to check the adverse trends. The ramifications will affect our people and the world for years to come.

When, as would be inevitable, the fact that the United States had made a decision to slip to an inferior status was appreciated by the world, we would begin living in a world fundamentally different from the one we have known during our lifetimes.

COMMANDERS DIGEST

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